

real, fundamental principle is. The fundamental principle about the line-item veto is requiring of a two-thirds majority of both Houses to override a President's veto. Anything less than that is a sham and meaningless.

It is my understanding there is serious consideration being given on the other side of the aisle to a proposal which would require a majority vote in one House in order to override the President's veto. The American people will not be fooled by that facade. The American people will not be cajoled or deluded to believe that a majority vote in one House would be sufficient to override a Presidential veto. It only took a majority vote in one House to put the pork in to start with. What we are seeing here is a reluctance to take the issue head on, but to water it down so it is meaningless.

In the course of negotiations with my friends on this side and on that side, I accepted the separate enrollment. We looked at the expansion to entitlements. We looked at targeted tax benefits. And all of that is negotiable. It is not negotiable to the American people to dilute the two-thirds majority aspect of the line-item veto. Without that this is meaningless.

I understand there are various proposals being considered for an alternative suggested by the Democrats. I strongly recommend that whatever they propose does not drop the two-thirds majority. It is clear on this side of the aisle, because of the internal debate we went through, the overwhelming majority on this side of the aisle will stick to and adhere to a two-thirds majority in order for the President's veto to be overridden. That is the meaning of the word veto. That is what it all is about in the 43 States in America, where Governors have the line-item veto. We will accept nothing less.

If people on the other side of the aisle or anywhere support such a weakening of the line-item veto, I warn them: The American people will not be fooled.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WASHINGTON POST STORY

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, an article appeared in today's Washington Post with the catchy, but entirely misleading, headline "Dole Takes 180-Degree Turn on Affirmative Action."

I would like to take a few moments now to set the record straight.

If affirmative action means remedying proven past discrimination against individuals, then I am all for it.

If affirmative action means recruitment of qualified minorities and

women to give them an opportunity to compete, without guaranteeing the results of the competition, then I am for that too.

But if affirmative action means quotas, set-asides, and other preferences that favor individuals simply because they happen to belong to certain groups, then that is where I draw the line.

Of course, those who discriminate ought to be punished, and those individuals who are the victims of discrimination ought to be made whole. But you do not fix one problem by creating another. You don't cure discrimination with more discrimination. As I said when the Senate unanimously adopted the amendment that created the glass ceiling commission: "There is no right or correct number * * * and my opposition to quotas could not be stronger or more deeply felt."

That was during the debate which apparently the reporter did not check into.

Mr. President, I am proud of my civil rights record and I have never shied away from it. I supported the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Americans With Disabilities Act. The compromise leading to the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1991.

However, my past record on civil rights does not, and should not, disqualify me from raising legitimate questions about the continuing effectiveness and fairness of affirmative action, particularly when the affirmative action label is used to describe quotas, set-asides and other preferences. In fact, it was precisely because of these questions that I asked the Congressional Research Service last December to prepare a list of all Federal preference laws and regulations.

And, after all, even President Clinton and the chairman of the Democratic Leadership Council are raising these same questions.

They understand, as I do, that no Federal program is writ in stone. And no Federal policy should be immune from congressional scrutiny.

This has been my position in the past. It is my position now. And it will be my position in the future.

If we cannot go back and look at some Executive order or some law that has been passed 5, 10, 15, or 25 years ago without some liberal reporter suggesting that somehow that is a change in position, then I think we are never going to accomplish anything. Things have changed. The programs have failed in some cases. In some cases, maybe they have worked properly. But we have a continuing obligation in the Congress of the United States, regardless of our part, to go back and take a look at programs or Executive orders, whatever it may be on the horizon, regulations that have been in place for a long time and maybe have served no useful purpose.

That is precisely what we intend to do. That is precisely what we will do.

Hearings will be held on a couple of these provisions, one by the distinguished Senator from Missouri, Senator BOND, and one of my other colleagues, the Senator from Kansas, Senator KASSEBAUM, relating to two programs that we think should be examined.

LINE-ITEM VETO

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, on Monday we are going to move to the line-item veto. I want to congratulate Senators MCCAIN, COATS, DOMENICI, LOTT, STEVENS, and members of my staff and others who have been working trying to bring us together on the Republican side. I think now that we are in fair agreement on this side.

I want to congratulate my colleagues, particularly Senators MCCAIN and COATS, who have been at this year after year after year, for their efforts. They have not given up and they have stuck to it and have hung in there. Now we may be able to pass this legislation.

Just as we had the debate on the balanced budget amendment which lost because six of my colleagues on the other side, who voted for a balanced budget amendment 1 year, voted against the identical—or almost identical—bill the next year.

This line-item veto has the overwhelming support of the American people. It will receive the overwhelming support of Republicans on this side of the aisle. I know that this legislation is opposed by some and by many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I know that they will do what they can within the rules to block passage.

But let me say that the line-item veto, in my view, is a little different than the constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. In the House, it passed by a vote 294 to 134. Strong bipartisan support. It has also been voted on a number of times in the Senate over the past years. We have had support from Republicans and Democrats, including Senator BIDEN, Senator EXON, Senator HEFLIN, Senator HOLLINGS, Senator KENNEDY, Senator LEAHY, Senator NUNN, and Senator PELL.

The bottom line is that here in the Senate a vote will be taken, and the American people will know where we stand. That is how this process works.

But will they know where President Clinton stands? That is the big question. Where does President Clinton stand?

For a long time, it was hard to tell where he stood on the balanced budget amendment. It was not until the final weeks of the debate that he finally did what he could to defeat the amendment, although he continued to say he understood why Americans so strongly supported it. About 80 percent supported it.